

### Innovative Wireless Community Selects Best Software's Abra Enterprise™ to Provide Online Employee Access to HR and Payroll Information



#### Customer

Buena Vista University, a leading New American College and leader in providing information technology to the campus community

#### Challenge

Integrate HR and payroll data into one centralized system and provide online information access to employees

#### Solution

Abra Enterprise™

#### Results

- Eliminated duplicate data entry by integrating HR and payroll
- Automated the creation of reports
- Reduced administrative overhead and increased service levels with online information access for employees
- Improved staff productivity so the department can focus on proactive, strategic activities

Founded in 1891 in Storm Lake, Iowa, Buena Vista University is considered one of America's "Most Wired Colleges." A leader in information technology, the university provides "anytime, anywhere" Internet access through the eBVyou campus-wide network to its faculty, staff and students.

In 1995, the university chose Best Software's Abra Payroll® to help track employee benefits and bring payroll processing in-house on its main campus. By 2000, BVU had grown to include 14 additional branch sites throughout the state and was in the midst of launching its groundbreaking eBVyou program.

In need of an upgrade, the university sought a new HR and payroll system that could distribute payroll processing administration to each of the remote locations while centralizing production in a single office. BVU also wanted to offer secure intranet access to its employees. In keeping with its practice

of leveraging the latest advances in technology, BVU chose Abra Enterprise, a Web-native, client/server-based HRMS system first developed in 1998 for organizations seeking greater performance and functionality than offered by Abra Payroll.

#### Smoother operations between HR, Payroll and other departments

One of the most immediate benefits that BVU enjoyed soon after implementation was the ability to combine HR and payroll information into a single program. "Abra Enterprise has saved us a considerable amount of time by eliminating the need for duplicate data entry by HR and payroll personnel. Plus, we now have the ability to automatically produce a number of reports that we previously had to prepare manually," said Sylvia Nelson, HRIS manager. "For example, our payroll specialist provides upper management with a breakdown of employees and their pay on a monthly basis. This report used to be a tedious process of double-checking numbers and then inputting the data into a spreadsheet. With Abra Enterprise, it takes just a few seconds."

Nelson added, "Abra Enterprise has given us so many more options to view and report on information than we had before. We now have census numbers and turnover ratios at our fingertips. And, thanks to Best Software's support team, we have the ability to automatically run custom reports for other departments throughout the university such as the Registrar's Office, Business Office, Admissions and Enrollment and Student Services."

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### Best support team provides peace of mind

When BVU decided to select Abra Enterprise, one of the factors that influenced their choice was easy access to Best's support staff. Nelson noted, "The support team was always there for us. They set up a number of custom reports and even an interface to one of our older systems that we use to report on faculty gifts".

"Best's support team was extremely helpful throughout the implementation process, and continues to be responsive to our needs today. They work hard to solve problems – if they can't give us an answer on the spot, they'll always call back within 24 hours with a solution that works," she added.

### Employees applaud online information access

As part of a wireless community, BVU's employees are used to having all types of information available at the click of a button, at any hour of the day. With Abra Enterprise, they can now view and request HR and payroll information whenever they want. "Its employee and manager 'roles' modules have helped us provide user-friendly online customer self-service, and that's been a huge hit," said Nelson. "Our employees particularly appreciate the ability to look up their past pay stubs. In fact, we are considering going to a 'paperless payroll' for those who use direct-deposit, which will save our payroll specialist about four to six hours per pay period that she currently spends on printing and distributing paycheck advices."

Nelson added, "The vacation and sick-time request function has been very popular because it has eliminated a paperwork avalanche for many departments." BVU also provides access to organizational information through roles such as the employee directory and university handbook. Once Abra Enterprise has been rolled out to all of its 14 branch sites, they hope to discontinue printing these items, saving significant production costs.

### Time for more proactive, strategic HR activities

Nelson concluded, "Our employees love having direct access to their HR- and payroll-related information. It saves them from having to call us and wait while we check their files and it saves us from having to answer their specific questions. The resulting time savings from the Abra Enterprise system have enabled us to be more proactive and anticipate and resolve problems before they happen."

As BVU continues to roll out and tap additional Abra functionality, the HR department is poised to realize a quick return on its investment. "By combining HR and payroll data into one system and providing so much information online to employees, our department has become much more efficient. We've been able to focus on more service-related activities and create communication pieces to inform employees about the benefits available to them. The HR department is looking forward to further reducing costs and improving service levels as we continue to grow with Abra Enterprise."

## The **ABRA** Enterprise™ family includes:

- Abra Enterprise™ Human Resources
- Abra Enterprise™ Payroll
- Abra Enterprise™ Employee and Manager Roles

The logo for Best Software, Inc. features the word "best" in a lowercase, white, sans-serif font with rounded letterforms, set against a dark blue rectangular background.

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